



MONTHLY REPORT JANUARY 2019

Wellfleet is Number One in the State for the Value of its Shellfish Landings!

In 2018, based on preliminary state reports, Wellfleet was first in the state for blood clam landings, second for oysters and third for quahogs. It was first in the state for the value of its shellfish landings with more than \$6.8M earned by hard-working local shellfishermen. About 15% of the town's population of 3,100 is involved in shellfish harvesting. We're the town's biggest year-round industry – and we plan to stay that way!

Commercial and Recreational Fisheries

- January's weather has been volatile, with below 28-degree temperatures closing the shellfishery for six days.
- The harbor was iced in and south winds brought huge icebergs in from Cape Cod Bay. This caused devastation for many growers who lost much gear and oysters.
- We sold 161 commercial shellfishing permits plus 4 eel permits, totaling \$38,422. There are still a few people who bought permits before the 1/31/19 deadline but do not have their state seller's card yet, so the permits have not been issued; therefore, the permit sales will increase.
- So far, for 2019, we have sold 177 recreational permits, totaling \$9,670.
- There has been very little boat activity due to ice. We took our boat out of the water.
- A rough, conservative estimate of commercial catches for the month is more than 195 bushels of oysters and 25 bushels of quahogs as tracked on commercial patrol.
- The recreational fishery is still slow, with approximately 3 bushels of quahogs and 3 bushels of oysters being harvested.

Enforcement

- Three commercial harvesters forgot to renew their licenses the first week of January. We made them go get them that day.
- All but about 15 grant inspections were completed for 2018. Tides and daylight did not cooperate. We will begin anew this spring.
- 38 overwintering agreements have been received. Three were late. Around 3,000 racks were left in the harbor by 44% of shellfish grant leaseholders.
- We have been doing spot checks on commercial harvesters, resulting in a few verbal seed warnings. We are focusing education efforts on the many new entrants to the fishery.
- We received a complaint about a boat fishing after sunset. We met the boat at the pier and boarded it, providing a verbal warning about time and inspecting all catch, which was legal.
- We conducted boat patrol and landing inspections without incident.
- We found a bag of oysters hanging off the pier and confiscated them, returning them to the Herring River, which is closed.

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State and Town Relations

- Constable Civetta attended a Dredging Task Force meeting, a 3 Kendrick Ave. meeting and a Planning for the Future of the Town meeting with other town departments.
- Civetta attended two Shellfish Advisory Board meetings. The SAB voted in favor of WSD's FY20 budget as proposed with increases to seasonal help and operating expenses and CIP submissions for a new truck and two outboard motors.
- Civetta met with the Town Administrator about WSD's FY20 proposed budget and presented the budget to the Finance Committee.
- Civetta distributed a memo outlining a potential five-year plan for WSD activities to the Selectboard and the Finance Committee.
- Civetta attended two Selectboard meetings, one where regulation changes and grant transfers were approved and another to provide info and feedback on the Mass. Shellfish Initiative.
- Asst. Constable John Mankevetch took the state biologist out for water quality sampling.
- We met with the new Environmental Police Officer, Adam Brightman, who will be assigned to Wellfleet, Eastham and Orleans.
- We attended a meeting in New Bedford on changes to the contaminated quahog relay program and provided testimony at a public hearing on MADMF proposed regulation changes.

Propagation

- The department drafted our propagation plan for 2019. We placed our order for County- and state-funded oyster seed, as well as other orders for oyster and clam seed.
- We held an Americorps project day to move our remaining oyster seed from our propagation bed to our pits at the transfer station and our gear to the sand pit. The department staff finished the task over a few more days getting all oysters pitted and all gear off by Jan. 10.
- Americorps members have been earning community service hours by making oyster grow bags for us. They made more than 200 bags in January alone!
- We conducted site visits to the old Shellfish Shack, 3 Kendrick and the L-pier with aquaculture nursery engineers Dale Leavitt and Rick Galat as part of a cost analysis and feasibility study for a potential upweller system.
- We got our last load of sea clam shells; we'll have more than 400,000 lbs. to cultch the harbor.

Education

- Civetta attended the Northeast Aquaculture Conference and Exhibition in Boston.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Civetta
Shellfish Constable